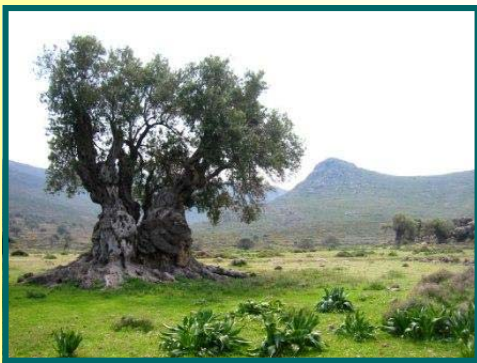


WATER-WISE LANDSCAPING (XERISCAPE)



SAVE water with a beautiful water-wise garden that celebrates the richness, beauty and diversity of Cyprus.

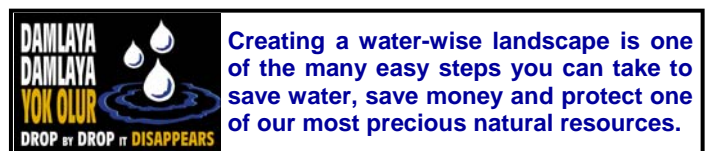
The Supporting Activities that Value the Environment (SAVE) project, funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), landscaped the garden and courtyard as part of its overall restoration of the Traditional Olive Mill. SAVE is dedicated to the protection and promotion of Cyprus' natural and cultural resources. This site celebrates both. It is a beautiful example of traditional Cypriot mud-brick architecture, showcases the integral part olives play in Cypriot life, and demonstrates how to protect scarce water resources and make the most of local plants.

The courtyard garden at the Traditional Olive Mill of Büyükkonuk is a **Demonstration Garden** that showcases water-wise landscaping (xeriscaping). The purpose is to highlight how beautiful gardens and water conservation can co-exist. It was also designed to feature the traditional uses of the Cypriot garden for the family to provide shaded work areas in the hot summer months as well as food and herbs for cooking.

Water-wise landscaping is another phrase for xeriscaping, derived from the Greek word "xeros" which means dry. It is landscaping designed to create a beautiful garden that requires minimal water by focusing on planning, use of native plants and water conservation measures. Water-wise landscaping is ideal for Cyprus and provides an attractive and responsible alternative for landscape architecture without sacrificing the aesthetics of traditional gardens.

Water-wise landscaping is based on the following 7 core principles, applied at the Traditional Olive Mill Demonstration Garden:

- **Planning and Design:** All good landscaping starts with a plan. Sketch out a design for your garden, consider your water requirements, landscape budget, appearance, function and maintenance;
- **Soil Type and Improvement:** Plants grow differently in different kinds of soil. Look at your soil, and change the soil mix if necessary to help plants grow better and distribute water better to their roots;
- **Plant Selection:** All plants need different amounts of water. Choose plants based on both appearance and performance in Cyprus' climate;
- **Grass Use:** Most grass needs a lot of water and maintenance. If you want a lawn, choose drought tolerant grass and plant it strategically in highly visible but low traffic areas. It cuts down on both maintenance and watering needs;
- **Efficient Irrigation:** A well-planned irrigation approach can save tons of water a year. Make the most of every drop of water with low-flow drip irrigation, household water re-use, rainwater harvesting and similar plants grouped together for irrigation "zones";
- **Mulch Use:** Mulch helps conserve water, reduce weed growth, and insulate the soil from temperature extremes among other benefits. Use mulch wherever possible; and,
- **Appropriate Maintenance:** A well-tended garden uses less water. Even though water-wise gardens typically need less maintenance, give appropriate care to your garden to keep it healthier, more beautiful, and sustainable.



Representative Plants Used in the Demonstration Garden

Olive Tree – the most Cypriot of plants. Three varieties are planted here – the cultivated *Olea Europea* and *Olea Europeasativa* and the wild olive tree *Olea Oleaster*. Cypriots regard the olive tree as a symbol of peace, prosperity and victory. It produces olives and olive oil; the fruit is eaten by many bird species; and dried leaves are used as incense. Many Cypriots believe that its very aroma protects households from the evil eye.

White Mulberry Tree – located in the center of the courtyard, this tree was heavily planted for producing silk. Its large leaves were the source of food for silkworms and various domestic animals, and its fruit is delicious. It is a valuable shade tree in the garden.



Bougainvillea – this beautiful flowering vine is not native to Cyprus but has adapted well. It is growing over the entry arch to this site. It is one of the most popular ornamental plants on the island, bringing rich colors to gardens and walls.



Grape Vine – draped over the arbour next to the Press Room, it is still a household staple, producing grapes for food and wine while the vine leaves are used to make the traditional dish of stuffed grape leaves. Most Cypriot homes have a grape



Common Myrtle (*Myrtus communis*) – this indigenous plant produces a popular fruit. Its small white berries are sweet when ripe from October to January. It is a traditional mainstay in Cypriot gardens, particularly for its pleasant scent.

Fruit Trees and Herbs – these items are all of great importance to many Cypriots and most gardens will have at least one fruit tree and many herbs growing in it. Cypriots have always had a practical approach to gardening – they plant to produce. Thus most elements of a Cypriot garden serve a specific purpose. This garden contains a lemon tree, pomegranate tree, rosemary, sage, mint and lavender.

Lemon Tree – this fruit is a staple in Cypriot diet and is also an export crop.



Pomegranate Tree – this fruit tree is particularly suited to Cyprus as it uses significantly less water than citrus and other fruit trees. Its fruit and juice are delicious and nutritious and global demand for both today is high. Historically, a powerful black dye was created from the seeds, which was used in the manufacture of local clothing until the 1950's.



Rosemary – this savory herb is indigenous and grows wild throughout Cyprus. It is a staple in Cypriot cuisine – its crushed leaves produce scented oil while whole leaves are used to flavor food and sweets. The flowering leaves are used during the Greek Orthodox Easter celebrations to decorate Christ's tomb.



Prickly Pear (*Opuntia ficus-barbarica*) – this cactus-like plant is found all over the island. It is planted for its edible fruits and also is used for hedges, firebreaks and as a stabilization mechanism for erosion.



Succulents – many varieties of succulents are planted, such as Cat Claws and Hardy Mesembreanthems. Their fleshy foliage is an ingenious water storage system and they flower throughout the summer seasons when most areas are dry and brown.

Grasses – Pampas Grass, Purple Maiden Grass and Fescue Grass are planted for decoration as they are highly drought tolerant so provide a splash of color throughout the year.



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